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ABSTRACT

This publication discusses issues related to imperialism. It examines the 1857 uprising against the British in India; examines how Hawaii became a U.S. territory at the turn of the 20th century; and reviews oil and U.S. energy policy, particularly the debate over drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, an issue relevant to September 11, 2001, U.S. energy policy. Each article provides student activities for writing and discussion. The Postscript section lists resources and materials for civic education. (BT)

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Imperialism.

Carlton Martz

Bill of Rights in Action v18 n2 Spring 2002

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CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION SPRING 2002 VOLUME 18 NUMBER 2

The Great Rebellion of 1857 in India

In 1857, mutiny, rebellion, and terror threatened British colonial rule in India.

Hinduism is the religion of most Indian people. It originated in India thousands of years ago. As part of their culture and religion, Indians developed a rigid caste system. Individuals were born into specific social and occupational groups and were bound to follow the strict rules of their caste throughout their lives.

Sepoy and British cavalrymen fight one of the many battles of the Great Rebellion in India. (Bettmann/CORBIS)

The Islamic religion entered India about A.D. 700, when Muslim peoples began a series of invasions from West and Central Asia. The Muslims attempted to impose Islam on the Indian people. They succeeded in creating several strong Muslim kingdoms and empires, but the Muslims always ruled as a religious minority in Hindu India.

In the early 1700s, Hindu revolts and a breakdown in law and order ended the last Muslim empire in India. After that, Hindu and Muslim nobles ruled many small independent kingdoms throughout the country.

WORLD HISTORY

The East India Company

By the 1600s, the British and other European Christian nations were making their own inroads into this ancient land. The lucrative spice trade first attracted the Europeans. The Portuguese took control of the Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea, seizing and confiscating Muslim ships. The Dutch and British soon followed. Queen Elizabeth chartered the British East India Company, a private company of British merchants, giving it a monopoly in trading with India. In 1613, the Muslim emperor of India granted the company the right to establish trading stations in the Bengal region of northeast India. In addition to spices, the company shipped raw materials (such as cotton) to England and imported English manufactured goods (such as clothing) to sell to the Indian people.

Control

By making treaties with local Indian princes and warlords, the East India Company rapidly controlled more and more Indian territory. By 1849, it had subdued all of India, but allowed Indian kings to rule some areas. Company officials in India made fabulous fortunes, living in huge houses attended by scores of Indian servants.

(Continued on next page)

Imperialism

This *Bill of Rights in Action* contains two articles related to imperialism. It also has one article related to an issue relevant to September 11—U.S. energy policy. The first article examines the 1857 uprising against the British in India. The second article looks at oil and U.S. energy policy, particularly the debate over drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The last article examines how Hawaii became a U.S. territory at the turn of the 20th century.

World History: The Great Rebellion of 1857 in India

Current Issues: Oil and National Security

U.S. History: The Debate Over Hawaii and an American Overseas Empire

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At first, the East India Company directly ruled British-controlled areas of India, such as Bengal. In 1784, however, the British Parliament put the company under its authority. Even so, the day- to-day administration of law in British India remained in the hands of the company.

The East India Company used three large private armies to protect its property and to expand its control over Indian territory. By 1856, the company employed 300,000 native Indian troops. Most were infantrymen called sepoys. Three-fourths of the sepoys were Hindus, and the rest were Muslims.

The company hired British officers and soldiers to command the sepoy regiments. For the most part, these British military men had as little contact with their sepoy troops as possible. Most of the British considered them racially inferior.

The sepoys had a reputation as fierce fighters. In general, they were taller, stronger, and healthier than the British, who tended to wilt in the Indian heat. The Hindu sepoys carefully observed their duty to their caste and religion, which forbade them to eat beef. The Muslims equally followed their faith, which prohibited them from eating pork.

Discontent among the Bengal sepoys grew as the Indian people became restless over British rule. Many Indians resisted when the British tried to abolish ancient Hindu customs and caste rules. They resented that the British also encouraged Christian missionaries. Most Hindus and Muslims believed that the British wanted to destroy their religions.

Appointed by the British government in 1848, the governor-general of the East India Company, Lord James Dalhousie, imposed "reforms" that overturned many Indian traditions. Dalhousie never consulted with Indian leaders. He proceeded on the assumption that Western civilization far surpassed that of India. He replaced justice by village elders with a British court system. He introduced the British method of schooling and made English the official language of the government.

For centuries, large landowners owned India's villages and the lands worked by tenant farmers. Lord Dalhousie broke up these large estates and distributed the land to the tenant farmers. Then the British required them to pay land taxes. With their estates gone, the large landowners were ruined. But so were many of the small farmers, who soon lost their farms due to back taxes.

Dalhousie also pursued a policy of annexing more Indian territory for the East India Company. For example, in 1856, Dalhousie used the threat of military force to remove the Hindu king of Oudh and take over his kingdom. Oudh, located in north-central India near Nepal, was the homeland of many Bengal sepoys.

Dalhousie's reforms and annexations, together with increasing rumors of rebellion, unsettled the 130,000 Bengal Army sepoys stationed throughout northern India. The vastly outnumbered British, however, refused to believe that "their" sepoys would ever revolt.

From Mutiny to Uprising

Early in 1857, the British issued a new rifle to the sepoy regiments. The rifle fired a paper cartridge that combined the gunpowder and the bullet. The rifleman had to bite off the end of the cartridge before pushing it down the barrel of the gun. To ease its passage down the gun barrel, each cartridge was heavily greased with beef or pork fat. This horrified the Hindu and Muslim sepoys. They would have to bite into beef or pork fat to use the new cartridges. This act, they believed, would violate their religions.

The British quickly realized their mistake and tried to assure the sepoys that they would not have to use cartridges greased with beef or pork fat. But the sepoys distrusted their British officers. Rumors quickly spread from one regiment to another that the British were insulting the Hindu and Muslim religions by issuing the new greased cartridges.

In April 1857 at a military post near Delhi, 85 sepoy cavalrymen refused to use the new cartridges when ordered to do so. The British court-martialed and sentenced them to prison. After the sentencing, the British humiliated them by stripping off their uniforms and shackling their ankles in front of 4,000 sepoy troops. Shocked by what they had seen, the troops mutinied. They quickly overwhelmed the British and released the sepoy prisoners. They then began shooting every British man, woman, and child in sight. When the slaughter ended, the mutineers marched off to Delhi to seek the help of an elderly Muslim king who had stepped down from power many years before.

As the sepoys entered Delhi, the people of the city joined them in seeking out the old Muslim king. Both

Hindus and Muslims respected him as a symbol of the traditional way of life.

At first reluctant, Bahadur Shah II, "King of Delhi," finally agreed to take up the sepoy cause. He called for all Hindus and Muslims to unite. "May all the enemies of the Faith be killed today," he said, "and the [foreigners] be destroyed root and branch!"

Shocked by the capture of Delhi by sepoy mutineers, the British began to disarm the East India Company sepoy regiments. When the sepoy mutiny first erupted, the British had only 23,000 regular British army troops in India to restore order. Eventually, the British had to bring in troops from all over their empire to fight the rebels.

Civilian rebels soon outnumbered the sepoys. The mutiny grew into a general uprising against the British across northern and central India. Sepoy regiments, together with farmers, villagers, government workers, dispossessed estate owners, and bands of robbers, looted and burned British homes, churches, missions, and East India Company property. They also hunted down and killed any British people they found.

British army units began their own war of vengeance. On their way to recapture Delhi, British soldiers randomly tortured, shot, and hanged hundreds of Indian people. The British executed many sepoy mutineers they captured by lashing the victim to the muzzle of a cannon and blasting him to pieces.

The Cawnpore Massacres

Cawnpore was an East India Company trading center on the upper Ganges River. On June 5, the Cawnpore sepoy garrison mutinied. The panicked British soldiers and civilians fled to the army officers' barracks.

Just then, a local Hindu noble, Nana Sahib, arrived at Cawnpore with 300 men. He held a bitter grudge against the British. They had granted his father a pension for giving up his right to rule a nearby kingdom. Instead of continuing to pay this pension to Nana Sahib after his father died, as they had promised, the British cut him off. Nana Sahib joined with the Cawnpore mutineers and agreed to lead them.

For more than 20 days, about 800 soldiers and civilians, half of them women and children, defended themselves as best they could. Finally, the British commander surrendered and arranged with Nana Sahib for the besieged soldiers and civilians to evacuate Cawnpore on small riverboats.

In the Cawnpore Massacres, Sepoys attacked unarmed British men, women, and children. This was one of several massacres committed by both sides in the Great Rebellion. (Bettmann/CORBIS)

On June 27, the exhausted evacuees headed to the Ganges to board the boats. But before all of them had gotten aboard, the Indian boatmen set several of the boats afire. Then hundreds of sepoys along the riverbank began shooting at the terrified men, women, and children. Cavalrymen rode into the river on their horses, slashing at the survivors with their swords.

From his headquarters a few miles away, Nana Sahib ordered his men to spare and take captive any surviving women and children. At the end of the day, he declared that the "white faces" had "entered hell." He proclaimed himself the new emperor of India.

Over the next few days, the mutineers rounded up other British women and children and confined them in a house. For a few weeks, Nana Sahib provided them with food, clothing, and medical care. But when a British army rescue force approached, Nana Sahib's followers convinced him that no witnesses should be left alive.

On July 15, after Nana Sahib had left Cawnpore, sepoys shot into the house that imprisoned 73 women and 124 children. Most of them died immediately. Swordsmen entered the house and hacked the survivors to death.

British army troops fought their way into Cawnpore, but were too late. Enraged, they got drunk, looted the town, and raped and murdered many townspeople. They hanged any sepoys they found. The soldiers often forced beef or pork down their throats before hanging them. The British commanding general devised a "blood-lick law," which forced the condemned sepoys

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to lick the blood-covered floors and walls of the house where the women and children had been slaughtered.

End of the Uprising

For more than a year, the sepoys and their civilian allies desperately fought the British army. The British recaptured Delhi only after several days of bloody hand-to-hand street fighting. The uprising spread to central India, where the widow of a Hindu ruler joined the sepoys. She shouted "We fight for independence!" She was killed in battle while swinging her sword on horseback.

By the end of 1858, the British had finally restored order. Queen Victoria pardoned all rebels except those who had murdered British subjects. British troops, however, continued to execute thousands of sepoys and other Indians. The British recognized that Nana Sahib had been an effective military leader against them. They offered a large reward for his capture. But he escaped into Nepal and disappeared.

After the uprising, the British began a new policy of respect for Indian religions and traditions. Most importantly, Parliament abolished the East India Company and placed the governing of India directly in the hands of the British government. Thus India continued as a British colony until it achieved independence nearly 100 years later, after a non-violent struggle led by Mahatma Gandhi.

For Discussion and Writing

1. The British gradually took over India. How do you think the British justified this takeover? Do you think it was justified? Why or why not?
2. What do you think was the main cause of the uprising against British rule in India?
3. The atrocities committed by both sides during the uprising were horrifying. Why do you think they happened?
4. If Nana Sahib had been captured by the British, what do you think should have been done with him? Why?
   a. immediate military execution
   b. trial in a British military court
   c. trial in a British civilian court
   d. trial in an international court
   e. trial in a traditional Indian tribunal

For Further Reading

Hibbert, Christopher. *The Great Mutiny, India 1857*. New York: Viking Press, 1978.

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A C T I V I T Y

Patriot or Outlaw?

Taking into account all the evidence presented in the article, do you think Nana Sahib was an Indian patriot or an outlaw?

1. Form the class into groups of three.
2. Each group will consist of one debater who will argue that Nana Sahib was an Indian patriot, one debater will argue that he was an outlaw, and one debate judge.
3. Before beginning the debating rounds in the groups of three, students should prepare by meeting with others with the same role in the debate. Those arguing the outlaw side should meet in one corner of the room; those arguing the patriot side, in another corner; and the judges, in another. The debaters should develop arguments and the judges should prepare questions to ask both sides
4. In round one, the debater in each group arguing the outlaw side will present his or her evidence to the judge.
5. In round two, the debater in each group arguing the patriot side will present his or her case to the judge.
6. During rounds one and two, the judge should be prepared to ask questions to clarify and probe the debater's arguments.
7. In round three, both debaters in each group meet with their judge to argue against each other.
8. In round four, all the judges meet in a circle to discuss the debate question before the rest of the class.
9. After discussion, each judge announces his or her vote on the question along with reasons for it.

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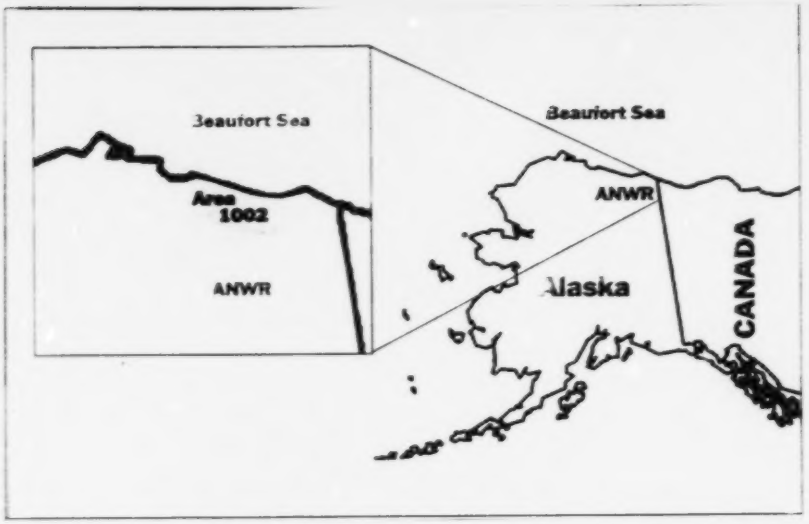
Oil and National Security

The war on terrorism makes it urgent for the American people to make some hard choices on what to do about the nation's dependence on foreign oil.

In 1904, President Theodore Roosevelt pushed a button in the White House to turn on the electric lights of the St. Louis World's Fair. This event symbolized the start of a new American industrial economy, made possible by natural energy sources. As the century progressed, energy from coal and oil lit our cities, heated our homes, fueled our cars, and powered our manufacturing plants.



The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) is about 20 million acres in northeast Alaska. Area 1002, about 1.5 million acres of ANWR, has been set aside for possible oil production.

By the end of World War II, petroleum had overtaken coal as the leading source of fuel consumed in the United States. By 1950, the United States was importing about 10 percent of its petroleum products every year from foreign countries. Recognizing the dangers of depending on other countries for our energy supply, President Dwight D. Eisenhower gave the green light to U.S. nuclear electric power production. Nuclear power, however, did not develop as much as expected because of public concerns over safety and a continuing controversy over where to store radioactive waste.

CURRENT ISSUES

The United States increasingly depended on foreign oil. Most foreign oil was controlled by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), dominated by Arab countries. America's dependence on foreign oil led to a crisis following the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. Angry at Western support of Israel, OPEC cut off oil to the United States. Supplies drew scarce, prices skyrocketed, and long lines resulted at gas stations. President Richard Nixon called on America to achieve "oil independence." He asked Americans to conserve energy by car pooling and turning down their thermostats. He extended daylight-saving time, banned gasoline sales on Sunday, and got Congress to approve building a trans-Alaskan oil pipeline. OPEC lifted the embargo in 1974, but oil prices continued to climb throughout the 1970s.

Nixon's successor, Gerald Ford proposed measures to address America's increasingly worrisome dependence on imported oil. Ford recommended "many thousands" of new domestic oil wells, fuel-efficiency standards for automobiles, synthetic fuel research, 200 nuclear-power plants, and the storage of oil for a national emergency. Congress approved only some of these far-reaching proposals.

In 1978, the revolution in Iran brought on another disruption of oil to the United States. Once again, gas lines formed at service stations even though Iran supplied only 4 percent of U.S. oil consumption. The oil crisis seemed to end by the 1980s. With enormous supplies of oil, OPEC started lowering prices.

Another oil crisis flared up, however, when Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990. President George Bush imposed an embargo on imports from both countries. Americans again faced a major cutback in foreign oil imports, which caused escalating gasoline and other petroleum prices. For the first time, the president authorized withdrawals from the nation's emergency oil reserves. President Bush also approved a "National Energy Strategy," which recommended more energy conservation as well as drilling for oil at offshore sites and in public lands.

By 2000, OPEC was once again attempting to increase prices by controlling world oil production. By this time, the United States was importing more than 50 percent of its annual oil supply, mainly from Latin America and the Middle East, including even Iraq.

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Bush's *National Energy Policy*

Today, the United States consumes a quarter of the oil produced in the world. Oil provides almost half the energy Americans consume. Americans use two-thirds of this oil to fuel transportation. The recent popularity of SUVs (sports utility vehicles) has significantly boosted gasoline consumption. Industry and home heating accounts for most of the rest of America's annual oil use. More than half of this oil comes from foreign countries that are often unstable or even hostile to the United States. Price increases by OPEC and supply disruptions caused by revolutions and wars could drive up gasoline prices, cause job layoffs, bring on an economic recession, and weaken our military mobility. All these developments could threaten our national security.

In May 2001, President George W. Bush released his *National Energy Policy*. According to the White House, this policy addressed multiple strategies to meet the nation's future energy needs and to protect the environment. Much of the policy statement centered on what to do about the increasing U.S. dependence on foreign oil imports, which are projected to account for more than 60 percent of America's annual oil supply by 2020. Relying less on direct government action and more on new technology and tax credits for private industry, President Bush's *National Energy Policy* attempts to achieve:

- Increased oil and other energy conservation by making buildings, vehicles, and appliances more energy efficient.
- Increased domestic production of nuclear power, natural gas, and oil, including drilling at offshore sites and in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.
- Continued research and development of renewable and alternative sources of energy such as solar, wind, geothermal, and hydrogen fuel cell power.
- Construction of a national electricity grid, additional gas and oil pipelines, and more oil refineries.
- Stronger alliances with oil producing countries in regions of the world outside the Middle East.

President Bush quickly sent a legislative proposal to Congress based on his new energy policy. Critics charged that his policy and proposed legislation were anti-environment and too heavy on "dig and drill." Bush responded by saying, "The truth is energy production and environmental protection are not competing priorities. They are dual aspects of a single purpose, to live well and wisely upon the Earth."

The Republican-controlled House of Representatives passed an energy bill in August 2001. The bill contained most of the president's energy proposals, including opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska for oil production. But the House bill left out significant increases in fuel-efficiency standards for autos and SUVs, which many Democrats had pushed for. The bill also proposed little to encourage alternative energy production. The measure then went to the Democratic-controlled Senate where it stalled, mainly because of Democratic opposition to oil drilling in the wildlife refuge.

The attack against the United States on September 11 and the war on terrorism reminded Americans that oil imports might be disrupted at any time, threatening America's economy and national security. At year's end, disagreement about President Bush's energy initiative focused mainly on whether to open the wildlife refuge in Alaska to oil production.

The ANWR Debate

In 1960, President Eisenhower and Congress established the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), located in northeast Alaska near the Prudhoe Bay oil field. Twenty years later, President Jimmy Carter and Congress doubled the size of the ANWR to almost 20 million acres. Congress, however, set aside 1.5 million acres ("Area 1002") along the coast of the Beaufort Sea for possible oil production. The government estimates that drilling in Area 1002 would probably recover from 4.3 to 11.8 billion barrels of oil. (This amounts to about a one- to three-year supply of oil at current American consumption rates.)

Drill In the ANWR: No

During summer, the top few inches of the Arctic tundra melts. Grasses and plants grow to support animal wildlife. The tundra is fragile. Oil spills would be a disaster. Recently, an intoxicated man shot a hole in the main Alaska Pipeline, spilling 285,000 gallons of crude oil on the tundra.

The ANWR is home to such wildlife as foxes, wolves, moose, caribou, polar bears, and migratory birds. A herd of 130,000 caribou migrates 400 miles north each spring to the Beaufort Sea coast where their calves are born. Developing an oil field with its roads,

ENERGY ALTERNATIVES		
ALTERNATIVE	**ADVANTAGES**	**DRAWBACKS**
Conservation Measures to: • improve energy efficiency of appliances, industry, autos, and SUVs • produce electric and hybrid autos • encourage voluntary consumer cutbacks in energy usage • increase energy taxes	• reduces dependence on non-renewable fossil fuels (oil , natural gas, coal) • reduces dependence on foreign oil imports • reduces need to extract fossil fuels from sensitive environments like the ANWR • reduces pollution • may reduce cost to the consumer in some cases	• depends heavily on willingness of consumer to reduce energy usage • autos and SUVs would be smaller and less powerful • electric and hybrid autos currently have less power and range than gasoline-powered vehicles • may require more government regulations • may increase cost to the consumer sometimes
Hydroelectric Water-powered dam turbines generate electricity	• renewable • non-polluting • dams also create reservoirs for city water supplies, farm irrigation, and recreation	• may destroy "wild rivers" • may interrupt fish migration and spawning • transmission lines may conflict with property rights and scenic values • most dam sites developed already
Solar Sun-powered photovoltaic cells produce electricity, heating, and cooling	• renewable • non-polluting • energy source for power plants, individual homes, and vehicles	• limited to areas with little cloud cover such as deserts • consumers must purchase expensive equipment for individual home use
Wind Windmill turbines generate electricity and pump water	• renewable • non-polluting except for possible noise	• limited to areas with steady winds • wind power more expensive than fossil fuels
Geothermal Natural steam from the earth powers turbines to produce electricity and heat	• renewable • non-polluting	• limited to areas with geothermal formations • more expensive than fossil fuels
Biomass Plant matter and organic waste is processed to produce biofuels like ethanol and methane	• renewable • little pollution • ethanol used as gasoline additive to reduce emissions • methane a byproduct of landfills	• requires transport of large amounts of organic material to landfills and biomass processing plants • more expensive than fossil fuels
Nuclear Uranium or plutonium used in a controlled nuclear reaction to produce heat, steam, and electricity	• uranium and plutonium plentiful • electricity cheaper than that produced by fossil fuels • non-polluting when radioactivity is contained • new reactor designs make nuclear power efficient and safe	• must store radioactive waste for 10,000 years • no storage site in place • radioactive waste must be transported to storage site • vulnerable to accidents and terrorist acts • nuclear power plants very expensive to build
Hydrogen Hydrogen fuel cells can produce power for buildings and vehicles	• hydrogen abundant (contained in water) • non-polluting • much more efficient than the gasoline engine • auto makers investing in hydrogen cell technology as the "future of the industry"	• requires another source of energy to make hydrogen • more expensive than fossil fuels • would require major investment in new refineries, pipelines, and service stations to compete with fossil fuels
Fusion Heavy forms of hydrogen produce a reaction that generates electricity	• fuel plentiful and inexhaustible • safe • non-polluting	• not technologically ready; won't be practical for more than 20 years

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pipelines, oil wells, and human workforce would interrupt this caribou migration.

It would take 10 years before any oil flowed from the ANWR. Even at peak production, this oil would provide less than 2 percent of U.S. daily consumption. The United States would still have to import foreign oil. In addition, the development of the ANWR oil field would create many fewer jobs than the oil industry estimated in a 1990 study.

Once the oil is taken, it is gone forever. If the goal is to lessen our dependence on foreign oil, then it makes more sense to develop more fuel-efficient vehicles and renewable energy such as wind and solar. Gradually changing the average fuel consumption of vehicles from the current 27.5 miles per gallon to 40 mpg will cut consumption by 2 million barrels a day by 2005. This is much more oil than the Arctic Refuge can supply in the same period.

September 11 demonstrates the vulnerability of our pipelines and major utility structures. Instead of making us more secure, transporting oil from Alaska would make us more exposed to terrorist attacks. Only conservation and alternative energy sources can increase our national security.

Drill In the ANWR: Yes

Oil drilling would disturb only 2,000 acres within Area 1002 of the ANWR. Moreover, new drilling technologies, already in use in Alaska, minimize damage to the environment. Clustering oil wells makes a smaller "footprint" on the tundra. Multiple and steerable drills from one well can move horizontally underground long distances to numerous oil deposits. Aboveground pipelines allow wildlife to migrate freely underneath. Heavy equipment can move on roads made of ice for much of the year.

In 1987, the Department of the Interior concluded from five years of biological studies in the ANWR that environmentally sensitive oil drilling could safely proceed. In the Prudhoe Bay oil field, caribou herds have actually increased since drilling began.

The amount of oil that is available in the ANWR just about equals the 23 years of production from the Prudhoe Bay field, which is now being depleted. ANWR oil reserves also equal 10–20 years of imports from the Middle East. Developing the ANWR oil field would mean hundreds of thousands of jobs for Americans and billions of dollars of revenue for the federal government and Alaska. Renewable energy is a good idea, but it will take decades to become cost-effective. Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton says that starting to work now on tapping "the largest potential domestic source of oil" is necessary for U.S. national security.

For Discussion and Writing

1. Why have several presidents concluded that America's dependence on foreign oil poses a threat to U.S. national security?
2. Which of President George W. Bush's *National Energy Policy* goals do you think is the most important? Why?
3. By one estimate, if SUVs (classed now as "light trucks") were required to have the same fuel efficiency as regular cars, the United States could save a million barrels of oil a day. SUVs would also probably become lighter and less powerful. Where do you stand on this issue? Why?

ACTIVITY

Drill In the ANWR?

1. Meet in small groups to discuss these questions:
   a. Why is America's increasing dependence on foreign oil a national security problem?
   b. How does President Bush's *National Energy Policy* attempt to address the problem of reducing America's dependence on foreign oil?
   c. What are the best arguments *for* and *against* opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil production?
2. The students should then each write a letter to one of their U.S. senators on this question: **Should we open the ANWR for oil production in order to reduce our dependence on foreign imports?** The letter should contain reasons and evidence to back up the student's viewpoint.

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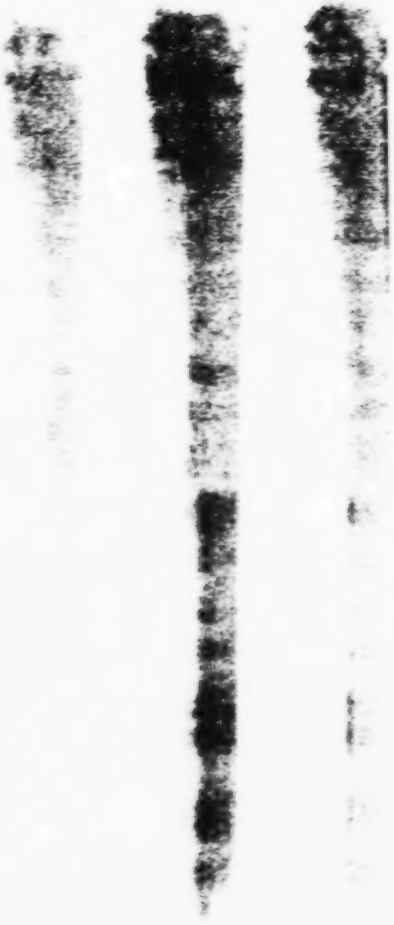

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Questions may be directed to Katie Moore at 213.316.2104 or e-mail her at **katie@crf-usa.org** or Laura Wesley at 213.316.2128 or e-mail her at **laura@crf-usa.org**.

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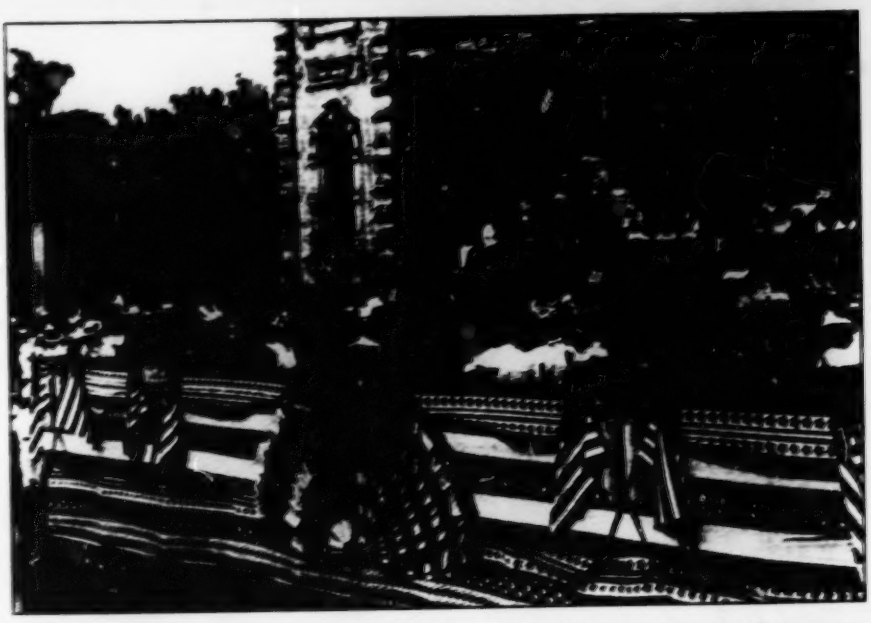
Constitutional Rights Foundation, 601 South Kingsley Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90005

The Debate Over Hawaii and an American Overseas Empire

Revolutionaries easily overthrew the native Hawaiian monarchy in 1893. The United States then debated for five years whether to annex the former kingdom and launch an American overseas empire.



On August 12, 1898, ceremonies were held in front of Iolani Palace celebrating the annexation of Hawaii. Sanford Dole (the bearded man standing) was the president of the Hawaiian Republic and its first territorial governor. (U.S. Naval Historical Center Photograph)

By 1795, the warrior chief, Kamehameha the Great, had conquered most of the Hawaiian Islands and established a monarchy. In the 1820s, American whalers, traders, and Christian missionaries began to visit and settle in the kingdom of Hawaii.

Although a small minority, the Americans in Hawaii soon owned much of the land, which they began to turn into large sugar-cane plantations. The native Hawaiian population dropped sharply due to smallpox and other diseases that came with the American immigrants. Needing more workers, the sugar planters imported Chinese and Japanese contract laborers who agreed to work on the plantations for a set period of time.

As their influence increased, the Americans became deeply involved with the government of the Hawaiian kings. In 1840, American advisors helped King Kamehameha III produce Hawaii's first written constitution.

U.S. HISTORY

By 1842, the United States had developed regular diplomatic relations with Hawaii and supported its status as an independent country. After King David Kalakaua ascended the throne in 1874, Hawaii and the United States signed a trade agreement lifting some restrictions on exporting Hawaiian sugar to the United States. In addition, this agreement permitted the United States to lease a naval station at Pearl Harbor.

For a long time, Americans (both U.S. citizens and those born in Hawaii of American parents) had resented living under the Hawaiian monarchy. They believed that since they owned about two-thirds of the land and paid the majority of taxes, they deserved a greater say in the government.

In 1887, a group of armed Americans forced King Kalakaua to agree to a new constitution that weakened his power. This constitution also contained property requirements that prevented about 75 percent of the native Hawaiians from voting for representatives to the legislature.

After Kalakaua's death in 1891, his sister, Lydia Liliuokalani, became queen. She was determined to reclaim the monarchy's old power on behalf of her people.

On January 14, 1893, Queen Liliuokalani announced her intention to proclaim a new constitution on her own authority. On hearing this news, a group of about a dozen, mainly American, business and political leaders started plotting to overthrow the monarchy. Almost immediately, the queen withdrew her plan for a new constitution. But the revolutionaries claimed that Liliuokalani had given up her right to rule by violating her oath to the current constitution.

On January 16, the U.S. diplomatic representative in Honolulu, John Stevens, asked the U.S. Navy "to protect the life and property of American citizens." Four boatloads of marines from an American warship in the harbor came ashore, marched into the city, and surrounded the royal palace. Stevens granted U.S.

recognition to the provisional government that the revolutionaries had formed.

The revolutionaries appointed Sanford Dole, the son of American missionary parents and a Hawaiian Supreme Court justice, to head the provisional government. On January 17, Dole and a few hundred armed supporters went to the palace to demand the queen's surrender. With nearly 200 American troops nearby, Queen Liliuokalani surrendered under protest. "I yield to the superior force of the United States of America," she said. The provisional government immediately sent a commission to the United States to persuade President Benjamin Harrison and Congress to annex Hawaii as a U.S. territory.

A few months after the Hawaiian Revolution, an American naval historian, Captain Alfred Mahan, published a stunning article titled, "Hawaii and Our Future Sea Power." Mahan argued that the United States should abandon its tradition of isolationism and, like imperial Great Britain, acquire an overseas empire, starting with Hawaii. Mahan's essay marked the beginning of a long and often bitter debate in the United States on the question of whether the United States should become an imperial world power.

President Cleveland Says No

President Harrison harbored some doubts about the revolution in Hawaii, but he signed an annexation treaty with the provisional government in February 1893. He sent the treaty to the U.S. Senate for ratification.

Back in Hawaii, the provisional government, consisting of about 20 white men, began to worry about the native Hawaiian majority that the revolutionaries had largely ignored. The provisional government declared martial law and ordered newspapers not to stir up trouble. The new government also persuaded John Stevens, the U.S. diplomat, to place Hawaii under temporary American military protection.

Popular opinion in the United States favored the treaty. But the presidency changed from Republican Harrison to Democrat Grover Cleveland, who objected to the use of U.S. troops in the overthrow of Queen Liliuokalani. Cleveland withdrew the treaty from the Senate.

President Cleveland appointed a former member of Congress, John Blount, to go to Hawaii to find out what had happened. Blount interviewed the members of the provisional government, supporters of the revolution and the monarchy, and Queen Liliuokalani herself. She told Blount that the "missionary party" had worked for years so that "their children might some day be rulers over these Islands."

Blount's fact-finding report convinced President Cleveland that U.S. diplomat John Stevens had acted improperly by calling for American troops, whose presence caused the queen to surrender. Cleveland sent a new diplomat to Hawaii to pressure the provisional government to restore the monarchy and the queen to grant amnesty to the revolutionaries.

The provisional government refused to accept Cleveland's demands. Sanford Dole, president of the provisional government, declared that the United States had no right to interfere in Hawaii's internal affairs. Surprisingly, the queen at first also refused to go along with Cleveland, saying she would never pardon the revolutionaries. She changed her mind and offered amnesty. But by this time, Cleveland had decided to let Congress debate the Hawaiian issue.

The Republic of Hawaii

Sanford Dole and the other members of the provisional government recognized that the United States probably would never annex Hawaii as long as Cleveland was in the White House. So they decided that they had better form a more permanent government.

In June 1894, a convention, composed mostly of Hawaiian-born Americans and foreign residents, produced a new constitution for the Republic of Hawaii. The constitution named Sanford Dole the first president. It stated that the republic's main goal was to be annexed by the United States. The constitution placed property and income qualifications on the right to vote and required voters to take an oath against restoring the monarchy. The provisional government proclaimed the constitution on Ju[illegible] 4, 1894, without any ratification vote by the people.

In January 1895, about 300 supporters of Queen Liliuokalani took up arms and attempted to restore her to power. But the government quickly defeated and captured the royalist rebels.

The government established a military commission, tried about 200 rebels for treason, and sentenced most of them to prison. The government also tried the queen

for treason. She denied any involvement with the rebellion, but declared that she owed no allegiance to the Republic of Hawaii, only to her people. After finding her guilty, the government restricted her to an apartment in the palace. Within a year, the government freed all the royalist prisoners, including the queen.

"It Is Manifest Destiny"

Republican William McKinley won the American presidential election of 1896. He acted quickly to sign a new annexation treaty shortly after he took office in 1897. Again, the question of Hawaiian annexation moved to the U.S. Senate.

Queen Lydia Liliuokalani, the last Hawaiian monarch, strongly opposed the annexation of Hawaii to the United States. (University of Hawaii at Manoa)

Imperialists, like Captain Mahan and Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt, argued that annexing Hawaii would help the United States become a world power. But the anti-imperialists opposed annexation. "The mission of our nation," said former President Cleveland, "is to build up and make a greater country out of what we have, instead of annexing islands." Thus, the fate of Hawaii became entwined in the larger debate over whether the United States should acquire an overseas empire.

By 1897, two powerful American interest groups had joined the anti-imperialists in opposing Hawaii annexation. The sugar beet industry did not want to compete with cheaper Hawaiian sugar. Also, many labor unions disliked the contract labor system in Hawaii and feared Chinese and Japanese workers from there would flood into the mainland, driving down wages.

The annexation effort bogged down in the Senate where a two-thirds majority is necessary for treaty ratification. But on February 15, 1898, the U.S. ship *Maine* exploded in Havana Harbor. Soon afterward, the United States declared war on Spain and invaded Cuba. Then on May 1, Admiral George Dewey destroyed the Spanish fleet in the Philippines. Suddenly, Hawaii's strategic location halfway to the Philippines revived interest in annexation.

The annexationists abandoned their treaty ratification campaign in the Senate. They decided to seek a joint resolution by the House of Representatives and the Senate to annex Hawaii. This required only a simple majority vote in each house. "We need Hawaii just as much and a good deal more than we did California," said President McKinley. "It is Manifest Destiny."

Hawaii and Empire

While the war against Spain continued during the summer of 1898, supporters of Hawaiian annexation made their case in Congress. Many pointed out the necessity of Hawaii as a refueling station for Navy ships on their way to reinforce American troops in the Philippines. Most of those speaking out for annexation, however, argued that Hawaii was essential for expanding trade with China and other Asian countries.

The House passed the Hawaiian annexation resolution 209–91 on June 15. Sensing defeat, the anti-annexationists made their last stand during a Senate filibuster (a delaying tactic in which Senators give never-ending speeches). They hoped to talk the resolution to death.

Senator Stephen White of California led the filibuster. "The annexation of Hawaii," he said, "will constitute the entering wedge for an imperialistic policy." He and his allies asked whether Americans should forget their own anti-colonial war for independence and establish a colonial empire of foreign peoples.

The filibuster speakers argued Hawaii had little military value. The United States already leased Pearl Harbor, and refueling at the island of Kiska (part of American Alaska) provided a shorter route to the Philippines than stopping over in Hawaii. Besides, defending Hawaii would spread the navy too thin.

Many Senate speakers doubted that Hawaii could fit into our democracy. Some questioned the capability of the native Hawaiians to vote and participate as U.S. citizens. Senator White asked if Americans should

(Continued on next page)

affiliate with Hawaiians who lived "far removed and alien to us in language and ideas." Others criticized that the natives, who still made up a large majority of the population, had never voted on annexing their country to the United States.

After two weeks of speech making, the anti-annexationists gave up their filibuster. On July 6, the Senate voted 42–21 to pass the joint resolution. President McKinley signed the measure the next day. Two years later, Congress passed the Organic Act, making Hawaii a U.S. territory and setting up its government. In the end, immediate wartime pressures and a desire to expand markets overseas combined to hand victory to the annexationists and imperialists.

Sanford Dole, the former president of the Hawaiian Republic, was appointed territorial governor. The first territorial elections, held in the fall of 1900, proved shocking. Candidates favoring Hawaiian independence won a majority of seats in both houses of the new territorial legislature. One of the royalist rebels, who had taken up arms to restore Queen Liliuokalani to power in 1895, was elected as Hawaii's first delegate to Congress. But this was the last election in which candidates supporting independence showed such strength. In 1902, Hawaiian Prince Jonah Kuhio Kalanianaole Piikoi ran for Congress as a Republican and won. After that, the independence movement faded away.

* * * * *

The debate in Congress over Hawaiian annexation took five years. During that time, the imperialists and anti-imperialists thoroughly argued their positions. After the Spanish-American War, Congress took less than a year to approve the acquisition of the Philippines, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Wake Island. The United States then had its overseas empire.

For Discussion and Writing

1. Do you think the United States should have annexed Hawaii in 1898? Why or why not?
2. Why did President Cleveland and President McKinley differ over annexing Hawaii?
3. What role did Hawaii play in establishing an American empire?

For Further Reading

Liliuokalani. *Hawaii's Story*. Honolulu: Mutual Publishing, 1990 [originally published 1898].

Osborne, Thomas J. *Annexation Hawaii, Fighting American Imperialism*. Waimanalo, Hawaii: Island Style Press, 1998.

A C T I V I T Y

Should America Have an Empire?

In this class debate, one-third of the students will role-play the imperialists of 1898 who favored an American overseas empire. Another third of the students will role-play the anti-imperialists who opposed an empire. The final third of the students will represent the American public who will decide the debate.

1. The imperialists and anti-imperialists will research the article and other sources to find arguments for their positions.
2. The American public will research the article to develop questions to ask each of the debating groups.
3. The Debate
   a. Round One: The imperialists make their arguments and answer questions from the American public.
   b. Round Two: The anti-imperialists make their arguments and answer questions from the American public.
   c. Round Three: The imperialists and anti-imperialists ask each other questions and make counter-arguments. The American public observes.
   d. Final Round: The members of the American public discuss the merits of the arguments they have heard and then take a vote on the debate question.

Sources

Daws, Gavan. *The Illustrated Atlas of Hawaii*. Honolulu: Island Heritage, 1994. • Damon, Ethel M. *Sanford Ballard Dole and His Hawaii*. Palo Alto, Calif.: Pacific Books, 1957. • Liliuokalani. *Hawaii's Story*. Honolulu: Mutual Publishing, 1990 [originally published 1898]. • Osborne, Thomas J. *Annexation Hawaii, Fighting American Imperialism*. Waimanalo, Ha.: Island Style Press, 1998. • Russ, William Adam. *The Hawaiian Republic (1894-98) and its Struggle to Win Annexation*. Selinsgrove, Pa.: Susquehanna University Press, 1961. • _____. *The Hawaiian Revolution (1893-94)*. Selinsgrove, Pa.: Susquehanna University Press, 1959. • White, Stephen M. "Annexation of Hawaii." [speech]. Senate of the United States. Washington, D.C., June 21 and 22, July 5 and 6, 1898. • Young, Lucian. *The Boston in Hawaii*. Washington, D.C.: Gibson Bros., 1898.

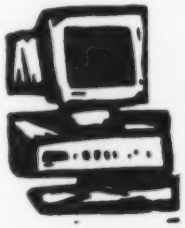
CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS FOUNDATION

PostScript

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS FOR CIVIC EDUCATION

New Lessons Available Online: America Responds to Terrorism

The destruction of New York City's World Trade Center and the attack on the Pentagon in Washington D.C. raise innumerable questions that can be dealt with in the classroom. Although these terrorist attacks have the greatest impact on America, they are part of a long and tragic history of terrorism that has been developing around the globe for decades.



Constitutional Rights Foundation has prepared "America Responds to Terrorism," a new series of online lessons and resources designed to help teachers and their students explore and analyze critical national and international issues raised by the recent events. Go to **www.crf-usa.org** and click on New or Online Lessons. We at CRF hope you find these resources useful.

The current lessons and resources available fall under these categories.

- **Reactions to Tragedy.** Suggestions for teachers on how to deal with traumatic events and how to handle controversy in the classroom. Ideas for service-learning projects.
- **Information and Disinformation.** Lessons on the media, rumors, and urban legends.
- **Civil Liberties in Wartime.** Lessons related to civil liberty issues from American history as well as contemporary issues.
- **Separation of Church and State.** Lessons on the doctrine of separating church and state.
- **Islamic Issues.** Lessons on Islamic law, freedom of expression, and other issues related to Islam.
- **International Law and Organizations.** Lessons on international law, the United Nations, NATO, and other international organizations.
- **Terrorism Links.** A comprehensive set of links to lessons, media sources, government sources, and information on the Middle East, Afghanistan, Osama bin Laden, maps and geography, Islam, tolerance, think tanks, commentary, and other collections of links on terrorism.

Constitutional Rights Foundation recognizes an urgent need for materials to help educate students about the tragic events and aftermath of September 11. **We are developing additional lessons and resources about terrorism and hope you will return frequently to www.crf-usa.org and "America Responds to Terrorism" as we continue to augment and update this growing site.**

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In addition to terrorism resources, you will find many other useful resources. Click on . . .

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- **Links** We have many great links. Our most popular set of links is our research links, which is a fantastic place for anyone to begin researching on the Internet. We have also just started adding links for all our publications. The first publication with links is ***Criminal Justice in America.*** Check this out.
- **Search** Having trouble finding something on our site. Use our search engine to find it. For example, if you want to know if we have a ***Bill of Rights in Action*** on Napoleon (we do), simply type in the keyword Napoleon and our search engine will locate where it is on the site.
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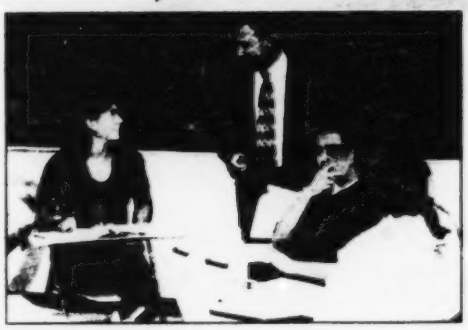
CRF'S Annual Summer Law Institute



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